in the *Library,* I59I-4*[1] *Books and Bocks and Readers*^ 1599-1603, of which the first is summarized in Appendixes i and 2 of the *First Journal* Of over 2,000 entries m the three *Journals*^ about a fifth are concerned with books of various kinds About one in five of contemporaiy books originally read yielded an entry Particular attention was paid to news-pamphlets, and to private letters When this structure had been erected, I began to write the *Jouf nal*

The first *Elizabethan Journal* appeared in 1928, the *Second* in 1931, and the *Last* in 1933, ending a work planned eleven and begun seven years before In this volume I noted in the preface " My purpose in the *Elizabethan Journals* was not to compile a book of reference but to write a journal of those things which most occupied /the minds of Englishmen during the years 1591-1603 Such a book, collected from sources so drverse and considerable, cannot be made by any mechanic rule or rigid principle it must be as much a work of art as of scholarship Others, doubtless, might have shown themselves more learned scholars or better ai tists, had they but tried , but, since no one had hitherto endeavoured to re-create this background to Shakespeare, and many have erred through ignorance of it, I undertook it myself If the common reader, who is the ultimate judge of all books, has found that the *Elizabethan Journals* have brought a freshness and colour to his reading of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, the work has fulfilled its intention , and if, further, he has taken some

pleasure in the *Journals* themselves, the pains of the author have been well rewarded "

The present reprint of the three *Elizabethan Journals* in one \olume has been reproduced photographically from the original text A few misprints have been corrected and a list of addenda and corrigenda added One new entry has been substituted for another on I5th March, 1596, which was wrongly dated The original Appendix i, SHAKESPEARE, has been omitted from the *First Journal* as it was afterwards